

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1-18. (Cancelled)

19. (Currently Amended) A method for producing a fabricated vehicle wheel comprising the steps of:

- (a) providing a wheel rim;
- (b) providing a wheel disc defining an axis and having a wheel mounting surface, a plurality of outwardly extending spokes and an outer rim connecting flange defining a side edge surface;
- (c) subjecting the wheel disc to at least a first window piercing operation to produce a first window portion in the wheel disc between a pair of adjacent spokes;
- (d) subjecting the wheel disc to at least a second window piercing operation to produce a second window portion in the wheel disc, ~~the second window portion being formed in the wheel disc in a separate portion of the wheel disc not including the first window portion,~~ the first window portion and the second window portion cooperating to define a single pierced window in the wheel disc having a predetermined shape defined by the adjacent pairs of spokes and the side edge surface of the rim connecting flange such that ~~each of~~ the pierced window[[s]] extends to an outermost periphery of the wheel disc; and
- (e) securing the wheel disc and the wheel rim together to produce the fabricated vehicle wheel.

20. (Original) The method for producing the fabricated vehicle wheel according to Claim 19 wherein the first window portion is formed by piercing through a first plane of the wheel disc and the second window portion is formed by piercing through a second plane of the wheel disc.

21. (Original) The method for producing the fabricated vehicle wheel according to Claim 20 wherein the first plane is generally parallel with respect to the wheel disc axis and the second plane is at an angle with respect to the wheel disc axis.

22. (Currently Amended) The method for producing the fabricated vehicle wheel according to Claim 19 wherein further including the step of subjecting the wheel disc to a third window piercing operation to produce a pair of third window portions in the wheel disc, the first window portion, the second window portion and the third window portions cooperating to define a single pierced window[[s]] in the wheel disc having a predetermined shape defined by the adjacent pairs of spokes and the side edge surface of the rim connecting flange such that ~~each~~ of the pierced window[[s]] extends to an outermost periphery of the wheel disc.

23. (Original) The method for producing the fabricated wheel disc according to Claim 22 wherein the first window portion is formed by piercing through a first plane of the wheel disc, the second window portion is formed by piercing through a second plane of the wheel disc, and the third window portions are formed by piercing through a third plane of the wheel disc.

24. (Original) The method for producing the fabricated vehicle wheel according to Claim 23 wherein the first plane is generally parallel with respect to the wheel disc axis, the second plane is at an angle with respect to the wheel disc axis, and the third plane is at an angle with respect to the wheel disc axis.

25. (Previously Presented) The method for producing the fabricated vehicle wheel according to Claim 24 wherein said spoke has a generally double-Z-shaped cross-section and includes a back wall, a pair of opposed side walls, and a pair of front walls, the back wall and the front walls extending generally parallel to one another, the third plane being generally parallel with respect to an axis defined by the side wall of the spoke.

26. (Currently Amended) The method for producing the fabricated vehicle wheel according to Claim 19 wherein the pierced window includes at least two clearance zones, the two clearance zones being defined at the two connecting zones of the first window portion to the second window portion, the two clearance zones establishing a departure from a profile of the pierced window predetermined shape.

27. (Currently Amended) A method for producing a fabricated wheel disc comprising the steps of:

(a) providing a wheel disc defining an axis and having a wheel mounting surface, a plurality of outwardly extending spokes and an outer rim connecting flange defining a side edge surface;

(b) subjecting the wheel disc to at least a first window piercing operation to produce a first window portion in the wheel disc between a pair of adjacent spokes; and

(c) subjecting the wheel disc to at least a second window piercing operation to produce a second window portion in the wheel disc, ~~the second window portion being formed in the wheel disc in a separate portion of the wheel disc not including the first window portion~~; the first window portion and the second window portion cooperating to define a single pierced window in the wheel disc having a predetermined shape defined by the adjacent pairs of spokes and the side edge surface of the rim connecting flange such that ~~each of the pierced window~~[[s]] extends to an outermost periphery of the wheel disc.

28. (Original) The method for producing the fabricated wheel disc according to Claim 27 wherein the first window portion is formed by piercing through a first plane of the wheel disc and the second window portion is formed by piercing through a second plane of the wheel disc.

29. (Original) The method for producing the fabricated wheel disc according to Claim 28 wherein the first plane is generally parallel with respect to the wheel disc axis and the second plane is at an angle with respect to the wheel disc axis.

30. (Currently Amended) The method for producing the fabricated wheel disc according to Claim 27 wherein further including the step of subjecting the wheel disc to a third window piercing operation to produce a pair of third window portions in the wheel disc, the first window portion, the second window portion and the third window portions cooperating to define a single pierced window[[s]] in the wheel disc having a predetermined shape defined by the adjacent pairs of spokes and the side edge surface of the rim connecting flange such that ~~each~~ of the pierced window[[s]] extends to an outermost periphery of the wheel disc.

31. (Original) The method for producing the fabricated wheel disc according to Claim 30 wherein the first window portion is formed by piercing through a first plane of the wheel disc, the second window portion is formed by piercing through a second plane of the wheel disc, and the third window portions are formed by piercing through a third plane of the wheel disc.

32. (Original) The method for producing the fabricated wheel disc according to Claim 31 wherein the first plane is generally parallel with respect to the wheel disc axis, the second plane is at an angle with respect to the wheel disc axis, and the third plane is at an angle with respect to the wheel disc axis.

33. (Previously Presented) The method for producing the fabricated wheel disc according to Claim 32 wherein said spoke has a generally double-Z-shaped cross-section and includes a back wall, a pair of opposed side walls, and a pair of front walls, the back wall and the front walls extending generally parallel to one another, the third plane being generally parallel with respect to an axis defined by the side wall of the spoke.

34. (Currently Amended) The method for producing the fabricated wheel disc according to Claim 27 wherein the pierced window includes at least two clearance zones, the two clearance zones being defined at the two connecting zones of the first window portion to the second window portion, the two clearance zones establishing a departure from a profile of the pierced window predetermined shape.

35. (Currently Amended) A method comprising the steps of:

(a) forming by a piercing operation a first window portion in a wheel disc between a pair of adjacent spokes of the wheel disc and a side edge surface of a rim connecting flange of the wheel disc; and

(b) forming by a piercing operation a second window portion in the wheel disc ~~in a separate portion of the wheel disc not including the first window portion, the second window portion in combination~~ which cooperates with the first window portion ~~to defining define a single completed pierced~~ window in the wheel disc having a predetermined shape defined by the adjacent pairs of the spokes and the side edge surface of the rim connecting flange of the wheel disc such that the ~~completed~~ pierced window extends to an outermost periphery of the wheel disc.

36. (Previously Presented) The method for producing the fabricated wheel disc according to Claim 35 wherein the first window portion is formed by piercing through a first plane of the wheel disc and the second window portion is formed by piercing through a second plane of the wheel disc.

37. (Previously Presented) The method for producing the fabricated wheel disc according to Claim 36 wherein the first plane is generally parallel with respect to the wheel disc axis and the second plane is at an angle with respect to the wheel disc axis.

38. (Currently Amended) The method for producing the fabricated wheel disc according to Claim 35 further including the step of subjecting the wheel disc to a third window piercing operation to produce a pair of third window portions in the wheel disc, the first window portion, the second window portion and the third window portions cooperating to define a single pierced window[[s]] in the wheel disc having a predetermined shape defined by the adjacent pairs of spokes and the side edge surface of the rim connecting flange such that ~~each of~~ the pierced window[[s]] extends to an outermost periphery of the wheel disc.

39. (Previously Presented) The method for producing the fabricated wheel disc according to Claim 38 wherein the first window portion is formed by piercing through a first plane of the wheel disc, the second window portion is formed by piercing through a second plane of the wheel disc, and the third window portions are formed by piercing through a third plane of the wheel disc.

40. (Previously Presented) The method for producing the fabricated wheel disc according to Claim 39 wherein the first plane is generally parallel with respect to the wheel disc axis, the second plane is at an angle with respect to the wheel disc axis, and the third plane is at an angle with respect to the wheel disc axis.

41. (Previously Presented) The method for producing the fabricated wheel disc according to Claim 40 wherein said spoke has a generally double-Z-shaped cross-section and includes a back wall, a pair of opposed side walls, and a pair of front walls, the back wall and the front walls extending generally parallel to one another, the third plane being generally parallel with respect to an axis defined by the side wall of the spoke.

42. (Currently Amended) The method for producing the fabricated wheel disc according to Claim 35 wherein the pierced window includes at least two clearance zones, the two clearance zones being defined at the two connecting zones of the first window portion to the second window portion, the two clearance zones establishing a departure from a profile of the pierced window predetermined shape.